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Official Records

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Wednesday, 9 November 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy ..... (Côte d'Ivoire)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Seniloli (Fiji), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 112 ***(continued)***

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

The President: In a letter contained in document A/49/400/Add.5, the Secretary-General informs me that, since the issuance of his communications dated 20 and 26 September, 5 and 14 October 1994 and 3 November 1994, the Central African Republic has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 44

Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1995: report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations (A/49/48)

The President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions contained in paragraph 34 of the report of the Preparatory Committee.

I now request the Rapporteur of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, Mrs. Lucille Mathurin Mair of Jamaica, to introduce the Committee's report.

Mrs. Mathurin Mair (Jamaica): It is my great honour and pleasure to introduce the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations and to summarize its essence.

The first chapter of the report, "Background and introduction", recalls in paragraph 1 that the General Assembly in its decision 46/472 of 13 April 1992 entrusted the Preparatory Committee, consisting of the members of the General Committee and open to the participation of all Member States, with the task of considering and recommending to the Assembly proposals for suitable activities in connection with the observance of the fiftieth anniversary. It was understood at the time that all decisions of the Preparatory Committee would be taken by consensus.

The General Assembly has since received two reports from the Committee. Paragraph 4 of the report draws attention to the adoption by the Assembly in December 1993 of resolution 48/215 A, in which it approved the creation of the post of Special Adviser, at the Under-Secretary-General level, against temporary assistance resources for organizing and coordinating activities related to the commemoration, and also requested the Secretary-General to provide adequate Secretariat support for the Preparatory Committee. As a

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result of the staff resources made available to the Preparatory Committee, the Committee has held 10 meetings.

I now turn to chapter II, section A, consisting of "Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary", and section B, "Drafting of a declaration". In its previous consideration of the matter the Preparatory Committee had been convinced that a suitable climax to the fiftieth anniversary would need to be identified. It should have universal importance, be enduring in its effect and have a suitable symbolic value.

Following consideration of this mandate, resolution 48/215 B was adopted on 26 May this year, when the Assembly decided to convene a special commemorative meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations, to be held at United Nations Headquarters from 22 to 24 October 1995.

In the same resolution, the General Assembly also decided that invitations to the meeting would be issued to all Member and observer States at the level of Head of State or Government, and that all heads of delegations would be afforded the opportunity to address the special meeting. The Secretary-General was entrusted with the responsibility of sending out the invitations requesting all Heads of State or Government of Member and observer States to advise him, as soon as possible, of their participation and representation and of whether or not they proposed to address the meeting.

The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report to it at the forty-ninth session in order to enable it to recommend a precise timetable and agenda for the meeting as well as a timetable for the conduct of the general debate of the fiftieth session. The Secretary-General has issued invitations as requested, and will report on the replies received as soon as the necessary information is available.

In relation to that aspect of the Preparatory Committee's work — the invitations to Governments of Member and observer States, I wish to bring to the Assembly's attention a letter which was sent by the Chairman with regard to the issue of invitations. Paragraph 8 of our report states that at the 18th meeting of the Preparatory Committee the Chairman made the following statement:

> "With regard to the issue still pending before the Committee,"

that is, the question of invitations

> "I have conducted extensive consultations and I propose to send a letter, in my capacity as Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, to the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, which would read as follows."

The text of the letter, which was addressed to Ambassador Al-Kidwa, is before the Assembly.

It reads as follows:

> "With regard to your letter of 27 May 1994, I am pleased to confirm to you that the arrangements mentioned in General Assembly resolution 48/215 B of 26 May 1994 for the special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, in addition to applying to all Member and observer States, shall also apply to Palestine, in its capacity as observer."

This letter was sent by Ambassador Butler, Chairman of the Preparatory Committee. It was adopted by the Committee without objection, and it was thus agreed that the Chairman would forward the above letter to Ambassador Al-Kidwa. It was further agreed that it would be appropriate for the Chairman to send a letter to the same effect to other Observers, should they so request.

At its 4th meeting, the Preparatory Committee established an open-ended drafting group to prepare a solemn declaration to be adopted in 1995 to mark the observance of the anniversary. It was agreed that the declaration should reaffirm adherence by Member States to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and guide the Organization's work for the future.

The drafting group held eight meetings. Following its 2nd meeting the Secretariat prepared a note that indicated that during the discussions concerning a conceptual approach, consensus had emerged on five main points, as indicated in paragraph 11 of document A/49/48. They include the following:

"(a) The Declaration must address the ordinary people of all countries, a distinction must be drawn between people and bureaucracies and it must be clear in language;

"(b) It must not be grandiose;

"(c) It must have substance;

"(d) It should be based on a thematic approach".

The drafting group was entrusted with the responsibility of preparing a document that conformed to these considerations. It was also agreed that all decisions by the drafting group should be taken by consensus.

A subsequent meeting of the drafting group further refined the conceptual basis of the declaration and, as a result, the Chairman was able to present to the drafting group at its 5th meeting an outline suggesting the following elements: characterization of the event; reaffirmation of the purposes and principles of the Charter; and the need to implement the Charter in contemporary and anticipated circumstances in the areas of peace, equality, justice and development.

On the basis of this outline, the Preparatory Committee proceeded with its work. On 31 May 1994, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries submitted a draft text entitled "Draft Declaration to be adopted at the special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations". At a subsequent meeting of the drafting group, the Chairman reconfirmed the two decisions agreed to by the Committee at its previous meetings regarding the basic outline of the declaration and its structure, namely, that it should be clear and economical in size.

At a later meeting of the Preparatory Committee, it was also agreed that the question of a draft declaration should be included on the agenda for future meetings of the Committee, pending resumption of meetings of the drafting group, which it was agreed would take place at the beginning of 1995.

I turn now to other substantive matters considered by the Committee, namely, the content of the celebration, commemorative programmes and activities. The Preparatory Committee has been brought up to date on the activities of the Secretariat with regard to world-wide commemorative programme development for the fiftieth anniversary. So the Committee has had the opportunity to consider the various programmes which are now being planned and to provide the necessary guidance.

Paragraph 16 stresses the strong view of the Preparatory Committee that the highest priority should be accorded to reaching youth. In that context, the Chairman of the Committee undertook to indicate to the President of the General Assembly the need for the Assembly to take action on the convening of a youth plenary as part of the commemoration, in accordance with Assembly resolution 45/103 of 14 December 1990.

The Preparatory Committee has also been briefed by the Secretariat on programme developments oriented towards children and youth including, for example, a global "teach-in" on the United Nations, which is in the planning phase. Its objective is to have all school systems designate time around 24 October 1995 to teach about the United Nations. The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, expressed support for the proposed global "teach-in" project.

The Committee has also considered a proposal from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning the creation of a United Nations fiftieth anniversary coin programme. This very important initiative will be the subject of a recommendation to the General Assembly at this session for its adoption. It is hoped that this programme will be endorsed.

As indicated in paragraph 19, the Committee has also considered a conference room paper containing a very comprehensive summary of global projects. They cover key programme areas such as education and youth; publications; film and television programming; media campaigns; discussion series and symposia; exhibits; concerts and public events; and commemorative items. All these projects are being overseen and coordinated by the Secretariat. Numerous additional projects are being initiated by Member States through their national committees.

The Committee was informed that the projects had been selected by the Secretariat from the several hundred submitted and were those that best met the overall objectives of the fiftieth anniversary, as well as the project guidelines and criteria established by the Secretariat. Some of these projects require both funding and executing partners, whether private, governmental or non-governmental, and these have been identified. Those in the developmental stage largely included projects for

which funding and/or executing partners still remained to be secured.

Paragraph 21 reminds us that the General Assembly has not allocated resources for commemorative programmes and events, and as a result, many of the projects under way are self-funded and thus reflect the availability of the resources of the executing parties. The Secretariat has recently begun developing some global programmes to be paid for out of funds raised for that purpose.

Let me turn now to paragraphs 23, 24 and 25, which contain information on the action that is being taken by Member States, including the establishment of national committees and the issuance of commemorative stamps. The Assembly will note that at present 79 Member or observer States have established national committees to coordinate preparations to organize the national commemorative activities, while another 29 have indicated their intention to do so. The Preparatory Committee has received information about some of the activities being planned by these committees, such as educational campaigns on the United Nations, conferences, the preparation of special programmes by the media, including major television stations and newspapers, the organization of essay competitions in schools, lectures, exhibitions on the activities of the United Nations, and the creation of commemorative items.

The Secretariat is working with the United Nations Postal Administration to develop a possible programme consisting of first day covers of commemorative stamps on specially designed envelopes.

With reference to activities within the United Nations system itself, the Preparatory Committee has taken this opportunity to highlight the mutually reinforcing goals of the United Nations and its sister organizations. So coordination of the activities of the United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system has continued to be ensured, mainly through the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), and, at the working level, through focal points, representatives who have been designated by the specialized agencies and organizations.

In the past year there have been three meetings with the focal points in the United Nations system. In addition, United Nations field network and regional Commissions have been mobilized towards the commemorative effort.

As is indicated in paragraph 28, the Committee was advised that the ACC, at its 1994 spring session at Geneva, had further considered these issues, including increasing system-wide participation in the fiftieth anniversary and consolidating the messages that the Organization would direct towards the general public during the critical year 1995. The ACC has also decided to organize a special forum during its spring 1995 session to discuss the future of the United Nations system in the context of the anniversary.

Paragraph 29 informs us that the involvement of the staff of the United Nations is a very important aspect of the preparatory process. The Secretariat has been in contact with all staff committees and has regularly briefed the Staff-Management Coordination Committee.

Paragraph 30, in section D of Chapter III, tells us that the activities of the non-governmental organizations have been a very important element in this process. The fullest participation of non-governmental organizations is being ensured, and there has been a great deal of contact and cooperation between the Secretariat and numerous non-governmental organizations that are actively involved in the planning process at many levels. Communication strategies have been developed, and particular commemorative projects have been identified.

The United Nations associations have been active and supportive of global efforts to commemorate the anniversary, in many cases actually assisting and working with national committees and spearheading anniversary preparations at national and local levels. The Preparatory Committee had the advantage of being addressed by the Vice-President of the World Federation of United Nations Associations on two occasions. The Committee was thus kept informed of the myriad activities being undertaken by the associations.

On the question of the financing of the fiftieth anniversary, paragraph 32 of the report refers to the fact that the financial situation of the Organization precluded making funds available from the regular budget. As a consequence, the Secretary-General established a Trust Fund for the Fiftieth Anniversary Celebrations for that purpose and urged Member States to support that initiative. Support was also sought from the private sector, including a number of global sponsors and international licensees.

The Committee was advised that substantial progress had been made in securing global and project

sponsorships, as well as some additional generous individual contributions. Further resources for programmes would be received also as royalties from a limited number of items bearing the anniversary emblem, such as coins and a commemorative watch. As is noted in paragraph 21, programme development was significantly augmented with self-funded projects.

At the end of its report the Preparatory Committee deals with its recommendations to the General Assembly. In paragraph 34 it recommends the adoption of draft resolutions, to the text of which I draw representatives' attention.

Draft resolution I, which is entitled "Commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations", says:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Noting* the suggestion of the Royal Mint of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland regarding the creation of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary coin programme and its offer to manage that programme for the benefit of the Trust Fund for the Fiftieth Anniversary Celebrations and participating States,

"*Noting* the positive report of the secretariat of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations on the offer of the Royal Mint,

"*Noting* the potential of such a programme to provide the Trust Fund with revenue to support educational and communications activities about the work of the United Nations,

"*Agreeing* that the issuance of legal-tender coins commemorating the fiftieth anniversary would be a fitting way for States to honour and provide a suitable lasting memento of this historic occasion,

"1. *Endorses* the creation of a United Nations Fiftieth Anniversary Coin Programme and the offer of the Royal Mint of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to manage that Programme;

"2. *Requests* the secretariat to make the necessary arrangements with the Royal Mint to implement the United Nations Fiftieth Anniversary Coin Programme on a timely basis;

"3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to write to all States advising them of the programme and inviting them to participate by issuing a commemorative coin honouring the fiftieth anniversary."

Draft resolution II, which is entitled "Work of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations", says:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Having* considered the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations,

"1. *Approves* the report of the Preparatory Committee and takes note of its work in 1994, including the progress of work reported in the open-ended drafting group of the Committee;

"2. *Looks forward* to receiving, before the end of 1994, the report of the Secretary-General on the responses received in regard to the special commemorative meeting to be held in October 1995, in order to enable it to recommend a precise timetable and agenda for that meeting;

"3. *Expresses its appreciation* to the secretariat of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations for its efforts to make this a global commemoration, involving, *inter alia*, national committees, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system and staff;

"4. *Welcomes* the commemorative programme being formulated by the secretariat, and requests that emphasis continue to be placed on the development of programmes addressing the general public, and in particular youth and children;

"5. *Welcomes also* the continuation of the work of the Preparatory Committee on the draft declaration for the fiftieth anniversary;

"6. *Decides* that the Preparatory Committee should continue its work and report thereon to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, and/or during the forty-ninth session, as required."

It is my responsibility to present these draft resolutions for the consideration of the General Assembly.

The President: I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed today at 11 a.m.

I hear no objection.

It was so decided.

The President: I therefore request those representatives wishing to participate in the debate to inform the Secretariat as soon as possible.

Mr. Lamamra (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): The consideration of the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations provides me with the pleasant opportunity to pay a keenly felt tribute to Ambassador Richard Butler, Chairman of this Committee, for the outstanding efforts he has been making in carrying out the mandate entrusted to him and for the vision which he is continuing to develop in carrying out his work. I should also like to express the appreciation of my delegation to Mrs. Sorensen for her dynamic work, both within and without the Committee.

The report, which was so clearly presented to us by the Rapporteur, the Permanent Representative of Jamaica, reflects all of these efforts as well as the great interest Member States attach to the work of this Committee and, through it, to commemorating an event that has left its stamp on the modern history of international relations.

The interest shown by Member States in this event, which is much more than a mere celebration, symbolic though it may be, demonstrates first and foremost the expression of their dedication to the ideals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to the reaffirmation of the continuing validity of those principles which led to the founding of our Organization. These ideals and principles have made the United Nations the principal international forum for the preservation of peace and security and for the advancement of equitable economic development and a more universally shared prosperity.

Next year the United Nations will be marking its fiftieth anniversary. During the half-century of its existence, the world — and our Organization with it — has experienced changes that have profoundly upset the general pattern of international relations.

The international order that was established 50 years ago was strongly shaped by the emergence of new players and by landmark events such as the massive liberation movement that made clear the aspirations of peoples to self-determination, development, security and peace through general and complete disarmament as well as the satisfaction of human rights and fundamental freedoms. All of these advances, which represent genuine gains for humankind, have become the pillars on which today's international system is based, even if the full implementation of the purposes and principles of the Charter continues to meet with obstacles.

The United Nations unquestionably has played the role of architect and catalyst in these numerous changes, even though at certain stages its work, unavoidably, went through difficult patches.

The end of the cold war, however, did not mean the end of uncertainty or of disorder. The series of events that has taken place over the last few years was hastily perceived as representing the very first fruits of a new order based on the revival of humanist principles, in the context of which a renewed United Nations could truly play its role, as conceived by those who created it: that of a great coordinator for peace and the vehicle for fruitful international cooperation for the development of all peoples.

Reality, unfortunately, did not live up to this hope. Indeed, by adapting, for better or for worse, to their new framework, the international relations stemming from this outline for a new world order generated new reflexes, new approaches and new efforts and initiatives, without, however, righting the structural imbalances or warding off the resulting conflicts and tragedies.

The continued deterioration of the economic situation of a growing number of countries, in particular of the developing countries, is promoting the pauperization of entire strata of the world's population. This poses serious threats to international peace and security, since it is undeniable that islands of prosperity cannot indefinitely flourish in oceans of misery and privation.

It is clear that, even if the end of ideologies could make us believe that history had completed its development, the reformation now under way of international relations has not yet revealed all of its aspects. This has given rise to the fear of paradoxical consequences fraught with serious implications for all of

humankind, which only the building of a genuine solidarity among nations and within nations could effectively ward off.

We are called upon by the commemoration of this prestigious anniversary to reflect on all of these consequences and on the best way to control their impact. This event will provide a new opportunity which the international community must grasp.

The end of the bipolar balance and of the uncertain and tumultuous period to which it gave rise have provided the United Nations a warning signal to grasp all of the changes under way and to seek appropriate solutions to the numerous problems that continue to arise.

As a unique forum for concerted action and dialogue among peoples, through their Governments, the United Nations has a particularly significant role to play in controlling the future course of international relations. At the dawn of a new century, the time has come to provide new content for its objectives and to create conditions likely to provide lasting solutions to the great dilemmas of our time — the result of the complexity of economic and political considerations.

The declaration which is to be adopted by the General Assembly at the special meeting that it will hold to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations should, to our view, regardless of what form it may take, take up all the considerations that I have just mentioned, which reflect the essential points of the aspirations of our peoples for a better future. It must be the starting-point for a renewed vision of the evolution of the international community and form the cornerstone of a celebration that will culminate in the holding of the special commemorative meeting, the scope of which must aspire to universality and have that positive impact that can legitimately be expected based on the faith of peoples in the irreplaceable role of the United Nations.

Algeria is ready to make its full contribution. It is already preparing to do so through the establishment of a national committee entrusted with organizing commemorative events, through which its people will experience, together with the other peoples of the United Nations, the intensity of the message of hope that our Organization bears. At the same time, national public opinion will be exposed, through the activities that will be organized on that occasion, to the sum total of the particularly rich experience of our country within the Organization, an experience whose landmarks are engraved in its collective memory and merged with its struggle for its emancipation and development.

Mr. Hurst (Antigua and Barbuda): I speak today on behalf of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) — the Bahamas; Barbados; Belize; Dominica; Grenada; Guyana; Jamaica; Saint Kitts and Nevis; Saint Lucia; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Trinidad and Tobago; and my own country, Antigua and Barbuda — and Suriname.

When the United Nations was established in 1945 none of our 13 countries was independent. In fact the majority of mankind at that time lived under colonial rule. Despite the lofty principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, 17 years would elapse before two countries in the English-speaking Caribbean and then Suriname would gain their independence; 10 others were to become sovereign States in the 21 years following 1962. The process of decolonization in the Caribbean is not yet fully complete, despite the gains made. Nevertheless, the role played by the United Nations in the decolonization process has been one of its major successes.

Since 1945 we have witnessed empires crumble and medium-sized States disintegrate; we have seen the growth in the absolute number of States and the appearance of micro-States — as within the CARICOM. During the past 50 years we have participated in global technological change and wizardry too incredible to have been predicted in 1945. In our view, no other 50-year period in human history has encompassed such rich and unanticipated changes, defying the sages of all hues.

In the almost 50 years since the founding of the United Nations the countries of the CARICOM and Suriname have come to regard this institution as a force for good. Our United Nations has secured our freedom peacefully; it has provided technical and financial assistance for our as-yet-unfinished development; it has addressed with frankness many of the most pressing problems affecting small island and coastal developing States; and it has shown itself to be a willing partner in our future.

The United Nations has become mankind's most important global institution. It is evident that the vision of the founders of the United Nations is shared by our 13 Member States and their citizens despite our exclusion at the time of its creation. Given its achievements since its founding, our task is to provide the United Nations

with a greater vision, to secure its continued participation in meaningful change, while attempting to engineer that change and to guide it during the next 50 years of its existence. The vision of CARICOM and Suriname grows out of our domestic reality; we hope to participate in creating a world where there is equity among all nations and justice for all peoples.

Our 13 small and peace-loving countries practice democracy; we recognize its inherent strengths, and applaud the United Nations for espousing greater freedoms. For these reasons, our Governments have undertaken to ensure that knowledge of the United Nations and its principal organs is well diffused in our region. We are planning to participate in the global teach-in which is scheduled to take place on 24 October next year. Our radio and television stations will also be carrying special programmes, including cultural presentations, informing the public of the activities of the United Nations. Every attempt will be made to reach young people, especially through our schools. We wholly support the minting of a commemorative coin and will also explore the possibility of issuing a postage stamp. Our countries' newspapers will be featuring essay contests, and several regional and local magazines will also be giving coverage to the commemorative events. We are also planning a number of national projects, and will inform the United Nations fiftieth anniversary secretariat about them shortly.

The office of the United Nations Information Centre in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, has done an excellent job in the Eastern Caribbean with its limited resources; it has kept the United Nations ever present in the consciousness of our citizens. The Caribbean unit of United Nations Radio has also played a very significant role in spreading the word. As a result of the years of preparatory work, we have, with ease, established a national committee for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary in virtually every member State. In several of our countries, including the non-independent, Non-Self-Governing Territories, private citizens have established United Nations Associations. The public and private sectors in our region appreciate the work of the United Nations and wish to be identified with the Organization. The United Nations is recognized as a force for good, globally.

The avoidance of nuclear war, for example, is of paramount importance to all the peoples of the world, because nuclear war portends such irreversible destruction and mass death. The small-island and low-lying coastal States of the Caribbean littoral equally fear the irreversible destruction and suffering which global warming and sea-level rise will inflict on our small countries. Just as the United Nations was instrumental in decreasing the threat of nuclear war, so, too, do the CARICOM and Suriname envisage the United Nations successfully persuading the industrialized countries to refrain from harmful production, wasteful consumption and destructive disposal patterns which may cause our innocent States to be destroyed. We are very thankful for the existence of the United Nations.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of our United Nations is thus a time for celebration and reflection; it is also a time for contemplating the future. The CARICOM and Suriname believe that our future will be even more exceptional than our past. We believe that by the year 2045 the United Nations will have reversed environmental decline, succeeded at global disarmament, resolved the debt crisis, created a just economic order, arrested population growth, reduced poverty, empowered women, eliminated discrimination against other vulnerable groups and saved the world's indigenous peoples from extinction.

If that is to be our future, then we must be for ever vigilant; we must never allow our United Nations to become undemocratic or weak. We, the peoples of the United Nations, must stand united for a better world.

Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (*interpretation from French*): Next year the United Nations, the only global multilateral forum, will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. This historic occasion will offer the international community an important opportunity to draw lessons from the past and to engage in an in-depth exchange of views on the role which our Organization must play in the years to come. The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic attaches great importance to this event and will actively participate in its commemoration.

Since the bipolar era ended, the genuine peace which the world needs so desperately has still not been established. Indeed, we have seen genocide, "ethnic cleansing" and other heinous crimes against humanity arise from border, tribal, religious and ethnic conflicts. In fact, our universal Organization is moving into uncharted territory. In order for it to play an effective role, the United Nations — particularly its Security Council — needs to be restructured and democratized. Bolstered by the purposes and principles enshrined in its Charter, it is called upon to play an important role in the search for solutions to problems or crises arising in

various regions of our world. By taking concerted action, the United Nations will be working in the service of world peace and development.

By its resolution 48/215 B of 26 May 1994, the General Assembly decided to convene a special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations, to be held at United Nations Headquarters from 22 to 24 October 1995. Invitations will be issued to all Member and observer States at the level of head of State or Government, and they will all have the opportunity to speak. We support the idea that proper preparation for this event will mean doing everything possible to ensure that the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary has lasting repercussions and great symbolic value. In this regard, it is important that the Member States, in their joint declaration, solemnly reaffirm the ideals and principles of the Charter and define the major guidelines for the Organization's action in the future. No less important is a heightening of the general public's awareness of the importance of the United Nations and its role in current international relations. The public's support and backing are clearly necessary if our universal Organization is to succeed in its undertaking.

Aware of the importance of the event, and seeking to ensure careful preparation for this commemoration, the Lao Government has created a national committee led by Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and composed of high-level officials from other bodies and ministries concerned: the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Information, the Committee for Planning and Cooperation, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Telecommunications, Posts and Construction and the Ministry of Finance. Working closely with the resident United Nations coordinator in Laos, the national committee is now engaged in active preparations for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Together with the resident United Nations coordinator, we plan to undertake the following major activities: first, a commemorative meeting on 24 October 1995, which members of the Lao Government, high officials of the Ministries involved and United Nations personnel will honour the occasion with their presence; second, a reception marking this event; third, exhibitions of photographs covering assistance of international organizations in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and activities of the Republic in various forums of the United Nations; fourth, sports competitions, including a marathon and football matches, between Lao officials and United Nations personnel; fifth, the issuing of stamps and calendars commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations; sixth, the construction of a public park to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary; seventh, the broadcasting of television and radio programmes and the publication of magazines on the history of the United Nations and its activities in the Lao People's Democratic Republic; eighth, interviews with Lao leaders and the United Nations representative in the Lao People's Democratic Republic on 24 October 1995, the day marking the fiftieth anniversary; ninth, the sale of T-shirts commemorating the fiftieth anniversary; tenth, the distribution to children of toys and souvenirs relating to United Nations activities; eleventh, the publication of brochures and pamphlets on cooperation between the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the United Nations; and twelfthly, the production of audiovisual materials on that cooperation.

With the support of all the Lao sectors and services concerned, this celebration is being prepared with great care. My delegation keenly hopes that the implementation of this programme of activities will contribute, however modestly, to the international effort to make this commemoration an event of universal importance.

Mr. Thanarajasingam (Malaysia): In less than 345 days, on 22 October 1995, our leaders will meet here to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. Additionally, there will be other activities at the national, regional and international levels to mark that important occasion. These activities will clearly involve many and various players: Governments, peoples, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations.

The occasion itself will be a high point in our continuing efforts to take stock of the United Nations — its past, present and future. An assessment of its past and present will be important in charting the future course of our Organization, which in many ways represents the substance and structure of multilateralism. For the vast majority of us who were not there at its inception, the fiftieth anniversary provides an ideal opportunity to help shape a multilateralism that will contribute to peace, security and development. The substance and structure of the multilateralism of the next millennium must reaffirm the ideals enshrined in our Charter. Multilateralism for present and future generations must address the concerns of all of us. It must over time resolve the inequities in

the multilateral system while ensuring people-centred development.

The Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, which was established on 13 April 1992, has continued to promote various activities designed to mark the occasion. These activities will have an important bearing on the public perception of the United Nations. A positive public perception would contribute to strengthening the United Nations itself.

Malaysia welcomes the recent resolution of the question of an invitation to Palestine to participate in the special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly at the level of Heads of State or Government, scheduled for 22 to 24 October 1995. Indeed, we were surprised that the question arose in the first place, considering the important developments taking place in the Middle East region.

We also wish to underline the need to continue the consultations on the draft declaration to be adopted at the special meeting. Document A/49/48 has detailed some of the salient elements pertaining to the draft declaration. For our part, we are ready to begin immediate negotiations on the draft declaration.

The various activities undertaken by the Preparatory Committee deserve the full support of all Member States. At the same time, those activities must reflect global diversity. The activities must be a true reflection of the theme of the commemoration, namely

> "We the peoples of the United Nations ... United for a better world".

We recognize that for the activities to truly reflect global diversity, there is an urgent need for the various national committees to play an important role. The priority task ahead for national committees is to heighten public awareness of the important role of our Organization. The continuing relevance of the United Nations must be emphasized and explained.

Malaysia, like a number of other Member States, has a national committee which has drawn up a comprehensive programme to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary. The programme encompasses the whole spectrum of our society, with stress on the young. The national committee itself is headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and includes members from outside the public sector as well.

Before concluding, my delegation wishes to acknowledge the full support extended by the Secretariat under the leadership of the Under-Secretary-General, Mrs. Gillian Sorensen, and her staff.

Mr. Ahamed (India): At the outset I would like to compliment the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations and Mrs. Sorensen, the Under-Secretary-General, who, with energy and enthusiasm, have put in a tremendous amount of work on the preparations.

We in India have already drawn up a comprehensive year-long programme of activities to be carried out between October 1994 and October 1995 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The programme includes seminars, exhibitions, the broadcasting of special television and radio programmes, the publication of books, the production of souvenirs and so forth. We have targeted a number of activities specifically at youth and children, for whom we are striving to create a better world through our work in the United Nations.

The year-long activities to commemorate in India the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations were inaugurated on 30 October, the date on which India joined the United Nations 49 years ago. The Prime Minister of India, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, addressed the nation on this occasion. In his address, Mr. Rao noted that the United Nations has been a major factor in maintaining peace and in changing the world, slowly and often imperceptibly, into a visibly different place. He said:

> "India became independent within two years of the setting up of the United Nations. The two grew together, giving strength and inspiration to each other in a symbiotic relationship. Each was the product of a long struggle, one of the embers of a violent world war and the other of the sacrifices of a non-violent freedom movement.
>
> "The United Nations was founded on the age-old dream of one world, envisioned for centuries by enlightened human beings. Our foreign policy has been deeply influenced by the universal outlook of the stalwarts who led us to freedom. India and the United Nations worked in tandem, their policies in complete harmony and their goals held in common."

Speaking about the tasks ahead of the United Nations Mr. Rao said:

> "Eradicating poverty, providing employment and creating a just, fair and equitable international economic order are prime concerns of the international community. Peace and security, to be durable, require comparable levels of human prosperity across the globe. The United Nations cannot function usefully or effectively as long as humanity continues to be burdened with increasing economic and social disparities."

Reiterating India's commitment to world peace and the progress of all human beings, the Prime Minister of India rededicated India to the cause of the United Nations as the only vehicle for steering humankind to a better future.

Our delegation has taken an active part in the work of the Preparatory Committee. We are happy that the fiftieth anniversary secretariat has developed a comprehensive programme of activities. At the same time, we have noted that those programmes originate predominantly from the developed countries. It is true that the charitable organizations, donors and cultural institutions of the developed world enjoy the advantage of proximity to the United Nations and greater surplus resources. We also recognize the fact that most of the activities of the fiftieth anniversary are being funded by voluntary contributions or are on a self-financing basis. Nevertheless, we feel that there should be a balance in the programme of activities. The programmes should be universal in nature, reflecting the diversity of the cultures of the States Members of the United Nations. The fiftieth anniversary secretariat needs to reach out to the developing world.

Our delegation expressed the view during the Preparatory Committee meetings that programmes of a serious nature, beyond the celebratory aspects of the fiftieth anniversary, should be given equal importance. We would like to see more programmes, such as seminars, discussions and so on, involving scholars, statesmen and intellectuals. The outcome of such activities would provide valuable input for the charting of the future of the United Nations. Such intellectual exercises would also be useful for analysing past achievements and for drawing lessons from the past and the recent activities of the United Nations.

Our delegation is of the firm view that a declaration should be issued at the end of the Summit meeting in October 1995 as the finale of the commemorative activities. A declaration reflecting the thoughts and sentiments of our leaders on the occasion will be the most valuable memento the celebrations can bequeath to future generations. Our delegation has endorsed the draft declaration submitted by the non-aligned countries in this regard. We would like to appeal to all delegations to demonstrate flexibility and cooperation in working out the declaration for the Summit meeting.

In conclusion, our delegation offers its continued cooperation to the Preparatory Committee for the success of the fiftieth anniversary celebrations.

Mr. Yaacobi (Israel): At the outset, I should like to congratulate the President on his election. We wish him every success in conducting the Assembly's affairs. I should also like to express our appreciation to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee and to Mrs. Sorensen, the Under-Secretary-General, for the informative report the Committee has submitted.

Almost 50 years ago the framers of the Charter of the United Nations set great challenges by making a far-reaching commitment to the loftiest ideals of humankind. They stated that the Purposes of the United Nations include the following:

> "to strengthen universal peace;
>
> "To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems ... and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms ... and
>
> "To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends."

As we review the past five decades, we can take pride in the United Nations impressive accomplishments and progress towards meeting those ideals. Yet we can see that the great task has just begun.

It is an unfortunate fact that only a minority of countries currently enjoy truly democratic systems. While democratization cannot be imposed from the outside, the United Nations can and should promote education towards democracy. Not only is democracy essential to full respect for human rights, but it is also a necessary condition for lasting peace, stability and economic and social progress.

The United Nations should be especially sensitive to this truth, having been founded in the aftermath of the Second World War on the ruins of a world laid waste by the forces of tyranny and fascism.

It is Israel's hope that the Middle East, in its search for peace, stability and prosperity, might become a model of hope for the entire international community. Despite many obstacles, we have recently seen in our region great progress towards a brighter future. This progress is based on direct, bilateral negotiations between parties that desire to replace conflict with cooperation.

The peace process began with a conference held in Madrid, co-sponsored by the United States and the Russian Federation. It was followed by bilateral negotiations on several tracks, by multilateral talks and by the Casablanca Conference on enhancing regional cooperation, in order to create a better economic and social reality for all the peoples of the Middle East.

As the prospects for peace grow, there is a need to devote more resources to social and economic development in the region. The United Nations, through such agencies as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), has been contributing to meet the basic needs of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Now these and other agencies are making increased efforts in cooperation with Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the donor countries to change the human, social and economic realities in those areas. Such a change is a necessary basis for a changed state of mind, one marked by an unflagging commitment to peaceful coexistence. The United Nations role in the Middle East during the next 50 years will necessarily be affected by these far-reaching changes.

Over the past five decades the relationship between Israel and the United Nations has known both high and low points. The realities of cold-war politics created an automatic majority in the General Assembly that would support almost any initiative designed to single out Israel for condemnation. Such moves tried to make Israel an outcast from the family of nations. It is our hope that this blemish on the record of the United Nations will remind all States of the dangers of abusing this forum of peace. By repealing in 1991 the resolution which libelled Zionism as a form of racism, the General Assembly took an important step in demonstrating that this lesson is being taken to heart.

Israel has a noble debt to the United Nations. It was the United Nations which, on 29 November 1947, adopted a resolution restoring sovereignty to the Jewish people after 2,000 years of exile from their land. Then, on 11 May 1949, the General Assembly welcomed the new State of Israel as a Member State of the United Nations.

Following the 1967 six-day war, the Security Council adopted resolution 242 (1967) which affirms the right of every State in the area

> "to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force".

The Security Council reaffirmed this right in resolution 338 (1973) adopted during the 1973 Yom Kippur war. In the light of the historic steps towards peace in our region, Israel has encouraged the General Assembly to avoid adopting anachronistic resolutions detached from the new reality. We welcome the progress that has already been made — the adoption of resolution 48/58 which welcomed the Middle East peace process and the agreements between Israel and the PLO and Israel and Jordan; the removal of contentious language and issues from other resolutions on the Middle East; and the elimination of obsolete resolutions that were contrary to the new reality. We look forward to further progress in this area, which would be a constructive expression of the United Nations commitment to the Middle East peace process.

Israel is pleased that its national preparations for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations are taking place in an atmosphere of increasing cooperation and improved relations between Israel and the United Nations. Our commemoration will include the printing of a special postage stamp and the convening of an international conference. We will devote special attention to cultural and educational activities aimed at informing the Israeli public about the recent positive developments in Israel-United Nations relations and calling for Israel's active participation in the United Nations system.

Israel looks forward to increased involvement in United Nations activities. Over the past year, Israel has participated in the civilian and humanitarian spheres in peace-keeping activities in Rwanda and Haiti, and in election monitoring in South Africa and Mozambique, and has made contributions in other areas as well. For the first time in over 30 years, Israeli candidates were

elected in direct elections to serve on United Nations committees and bodies.

Unfortunately, Israel has been refused membership in a geographic group at the United Nations and is thus barred from membership in all United Nations bodies in which the elections are based upon regional quotas of representation. As the United Nations enters a new stage in its existence, we again urge our fellow Member States to rectify this grave breach of the principle of universality. We urge them to help ensure respect for the sovereign equality of all Member States as envisioned in the Charter of the United Nations.

In ancient Israel, every fiftieth year was celebrated as a year of liberty and renewal. In Hebrew it is called "yovel", from which derives the English word "jubilee". As it is written in Leviticus,

> "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound... And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." *(The Holy Bible, Leviticus 25:9 and 10)*

May the jubilee of the United Nations mark a year of renewal for the Organization. May it be a year of peace and abundance, proclaiming liberty throughout all the world unto all the inhabitants thereof.

Mr. Elsafty (Egypt): My delegation welcomes the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, to be adopted by the General Assembly. We praise the capable leadership of Ambassador Richard Butler, Permanent Representative of Australia, who has been successfully steering the work of the Committee. We are confident that he and the other officers of the Committee will continue to play an active role in laying the ground for a very successful fiftieth anniversary. We are also counting on the hard work of Mrs. Sorensen, the Under-Secretary-General, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Public Policy, and her staff who are coordinating a worldwide campaign in preparation for the anniversary.

Last year an Egyptian National Committee was established to prepare for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary. We are looking forward to close cooperation between that Committee and the Secretariat for the United Nations fiftieth anniversary. At its meeting on 3 November, the Egyptian National Committee agreed on the final programme of work that will extend throughout 1995. The programme includes activities in many spheres. I shall not expand on the details of that programme but simply say that it will include activities in schools and the mass media — newspapers, radio or television. It includes the issuing of commemorative stamps and coins and exhibitions in Egypt and abroad. The Foreign Ministry will issue a White Paper and organize round-table discussions, lectures and United Nations models. In short we, in Egypt, will have a year full of activities to further the noble goals of the Charter.

There has been wide agreement among United Nations Member States that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations should not be celebrated only by commemorative, ceremonial activities, however important they are in spreading the United Nations message around the globe. Two years ago, the General Assembly established the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary and everyone agreed that the Committee should also function as a forum to reflect on the experience of the United Nations throughout the past five decades. At an early stage the Committee agreed to start drafting a universal declaration to be adopted by a summit meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary. It is unfortunate that no substantial progress has been achieved towards that goal. We are hopeful that the drafting committee will expedite its work in order to finish the declaration before 22 October 1995.

We are also hopeful that such a declaration will review the past, assess the present and look to the future of the United Nations. We should opt for an action-oriented declaration which would meet world expectations of that occasion.

Fifty years ago, the founding fathers of the United Nations aspired to very noble objectives when they agreed to the Charter. They were determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights and to promote economic and social progress. It is now time to evaluate the varying degrees of success with which the United Nations has helped mankind to advance towards these noble ends. We should also be able to answer certain fundamental questions: What should the United Nations do to respond to the new challenges to international peace and security? How can we further develop capabilities of the United Nations in the fields of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building? How can we turn the United Nations into an

> "international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples" —

a Charter objective that has never come to pass?

We shall celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations with the theme, "We the People of the United Nations ... United for a Better World". There can be no doubt that our world is better today than it was 50 years ago in many regards, as most people have been freed from colonial control, the apartheid regime has ceased to exist and no more nuclear weapons have been used. We can think of some other successes or success stories of the United Nations to tell. Unfortunately, we could also cite several failures and setbacks. On the fiftieth anniversary, we should make sure that the United Nations will contribute to a safer, healthier and better world in the future.

Ms. Vidal (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: In the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, the founders of this Organization enshrined the motivation that inspired its inception in 1945:

> "We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war ... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights ... of nations large and small, and ... to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom."

The past has shown us that, though we have learned about coexistence and respect for the integrity of each nation and each process, the road to tolerance and to the orderly development of a mankind equal and free from conflict is still long and painful.

The fundamental feature of the United Nations membership is its diversity, in linguistic, cultural, ethnic, religious, economic, social, political and other terms. This diversity, properly understood and harmonized, becomes a source of wealth that must be harnessed in our joint efforts to build a better world.

In the past, models of authoritarian domination prevailed in many parts of the world, such as colonialism or militarism. Today there is a clear trend to seek local systems based on participation and concerted action, and this trend must be extended at the regional and international levels.

There can be no doubt that the democratization of international relations must find reflection within the United Nations itself. As we reflect on the role of the Organization for the coming decades, we must bear in mind this fundamental trend towards a participatory community that constantly renews itself with new centres of development and of progress.

Since it is "we the peoples of the United Nations" and not "we the wealthy countries of the United Nations" for which this Organization was created, Colombia views with great concern the contentions put forward with regard to the restructuring of the major bodies of this institution.

History has constantly taught us that political and economic power is transitory. As we reflect about updating the United Nations in order to adjust it to the new realities, we must pursue the goal of creating a structure whose validity will endure in the coming decades. We must therefore not give in to the temptation of seeking quick formulas capable of only short-term solutions.

A creative, bold and flexible approach in keeping with the dynamics of these new and unexpected changes must be accompanied by matching actions and solutions. Only thus will we be able to keep up with the dizzying pace of a conflict-weary world on the threshold of the twenty-first century.

We are facing a new process of political change. History, however, is replete with such changes; it has demonstrated that power is fleeting and that no one people holds a monopoly on it. Today some have it; tomorrow others will. This strikingly obvious fact must guide our work within the Organization. Those who held power in the past do not necessarily hold it today; it is likely that those who wield it today will not wield it tomorrow.

Thus Colombia believes that only a participatory and democratic system, free of permanent privilege or category, will guarantee the durability and, in particular, the relevance of the United Nations.

Beyond merely political considerations, the United Nations in the years just ahead faces the challenge of how best to promote social and economic progress for all peoples. We are convinced that development is the basis for all other processes, including that of consolidating peace.

The United Nations must continue its military and civilian operations for the maintenance of peace, thus working to attain the most important of its purposes. But it must go beyond this, because although many such operations have been successful they do not of themselves create wellbeing, equity or justice.

We believe the time has come to take stock of the unquestionable achievements that justify the existence of the United Nations, but we must also recognize and analyse its failures. On this basis, we will be able to alter the course of an Organization which today has 184 Member States, composed with the 51 original Member States that subscribed to the San Francisco Charter.

The political, military and economic situation today is very different from that which prevailed in the post-war period. This requires an in-depth review and restructuring of the various bodies of the United Nations system to reflect the new international realities resulting from the end of the cold war: for example, the creation of new States; the increase in Member States, or those hoping to join; and the growing call for action to be taken by the United Nations — not only military, but also in vital areas such as humanitarian aid, the preservation of democracy, monitoring elections, defending human rights, environmental conservation, and economic and social development; to name just a few of the most important.

Beyond that, integral cooperation is another major pillar for the creation of structures to foster growth and progress. International cooperation must go hand in hand with effective and focused programmes at the national level. To achieve this, however, we need not force, but, rather, a concerted and united approach. The use of force is sterile when the aim is to generate wealth and development for all on a stable and sustainable basis.

We therefore believe that the United Nations, at a time when it is consolidating and strengthening its operations to promote peace, must also strengthen its capacity to act and respond in the field of human development, on the national and regional levels, so as to arrive at a fair and sustainable international system. The valuable resources of the United Nations must be organized more efficiently and used to serve the attainment of our common goal: a world in which human beings live in dignity, with respect and harmony.

In this context, we must intensify our efforts to evaluate problems and crises, while preserving the principle of peaceful coexistence. Otherwise, whatever we do, individually or collectively, will be ineffective.

Colombia believes that the United Nations certainly deserves an appropriate commemoration of its 50 years' existence. Though it can look back on both successes and failure, it is obvious that it has contributed a great deal to mitigating the devastating impact of the power struggle which has convulsed many regions. The struggle continues, to the extent that, as Alvin Toffler put it, industrial civilization is losing its grip on the planet as new forces destined to dominate the Earth are coming to the fore.

Therefore, the outlook is complex and full of uncertainty. We must work together to meet the expectations of our countries regarding the effectiveness of the United Nations. A concerted and cooperative approach, not diktat and confrontation, must be the Organization's tools over the next 50 years in order to make a reality of its significant, encouraging and splendid name, "United Nations".

Mr. Flores Olea (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): We are 11 months away from the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations; 24 October 1995 has profound meaning above and beyond pomp and circumstance. It marks a unique opportunity for us to stop and think about the most universal body States have created. It is also an opportunity for us to take stock of our achievements and our limitations, an opportunity to examine the new situation in which our Organization now finds itself as well as the challenges it faces at this time, as we near the end of the century and are on the threshold of the next. After all, the United Nations today has 184 Members — over three times the membership when the Organization was founded. This increase has enriched and raised to a new level our relationships in this forum.

Above and beyond that, the work of the United Nations ranges from peace-keeping to the promotion of economic and social development, from protecting human rights to environmental conservation and from fighting drug-trafficking to efforts to achieve disarmament. As a philosopher once said, nothing human is foreign to it.

The international community is unquestionably committed to an exceptional effort to strengthen the Organization's machinery to ensure peace and security and the other fundamental pillar of its work — the promotion of development.

The changes the Organization has undergone reflect an order profoundly different from the one bequeathed to us by the post-war period. To maintain its essential role on the world stage, the Organization must respond to the changes, learning to live with imperfections while correcting anachronisms. Today, as never before, world public opinion, the opinion of the people in our countries of "we the peoples", is aware of what the United Nations does or fails to do of its achievements and its failures.

We welcome the fact that last May the General Assembly adopted resolution 48/215 B, whereby it decided to convene a special meeting of the General Assembly from 22 to 24 October 1995 at the level of Heads of State and Government.

The solemn meeting of our Heads of State and Government is an opportunity for the adoption of a declaration that, as we see it, should reflect on past achievements, while analysing the challenges of the present and addressing trends that point to the future.

The Secretary-General, in his report on the work of the Organization submitted to the General Assembly last September, pointed out that the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations presented a historic opportunity that must be seized. He stated that:

> "The fiftieth anniversary ... invites the United Nations, its Member States and the peoples of the world to appreciate and strengthen the accomplishments of the past, to recognize and meet the challenges of the present, and to design and implement a plan for the United Nations of the future." (*A/49/1, para. 12*)

We have, of course, fully supported the work done by the open-ended drafting group established by consensus to prepare the draft declaration, and we shall continue to do so, because we feel that the adoption of a substantive document, coinciding with the meeting of our Heads of State and Government, is the best way to ensure the success of, and to give significance to, the October 1995 summit.

Of course, we should have liked the drafting group to work more quickly during the year. None the less, we are optimistic since, as we see from the report to the General Assembly of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary, an intensive debate has already taken place. Much of what emerged in that exchange will surely be reflected in the declaration. However, we must not put too much trust in propitious inertia, nor err on the side of excessive caution in a text that must speak definitively for us all and therefore must adequately reflect the problems of us all, the serious issues that we necessarily share, for good or ill. Thus, it is indeed high time to take pen in hand and get down to drafting.

Mexico's national committee on the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary is pursuing its work in my country, determined to disseminate knowledge of the purposes and principles and work of the United Nations. To raise the Mexican people's consciousness of the activities of the Organization and to ensure their support, we have agreed, among other things to be accomplished, on a programme of publications devoted to issues historically relevant to the United Nations, with particular reference to Mexico.

We are also promoting the production by public, private and university facilities of radio and television programmes devoted to the United Nations and have set in train an extensive programme to prepare translations, seminars and conferences devoted to the fiftieth anniversary.

At the level of our national committee, and as part of the programme for the issuance of special commemorative postage stamps in 1995, our Government will issue a postage stamp on the theme of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

Our national committee is supporting other activities designed to enhance the significance of the fiftieth anniversary, to which my Government attaches particular importance. In the same spirit, we have contributed to the trust fund established by the Secretary-General to support activities devoted to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary.

Mexico looks forward enthusiastically to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. We are joining in the exercise of reflection on the issues that is involved in the drafting of the declaration to which we have referred and which will undoubtedly be one of the culminating events of the special meeting of the General Assembly in October 1995 in which our Heads of State and Government will participate. We reaffirm here that Mexico is fully prepared to continue working with the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, Mr. Richard Butler, Permanent Representative of Australia, and with Under-Secretary-General Gillian Sorensen to ensure that the

commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary has the high profile and the substance it deserves.

Mr. Hormazabal (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: We are less than a year away from the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. For the Government of Chile, the commemoration of this anniversary is an act not only of justice but also of hope.

In the mid-1960s, Pope Paul VI, addressing the General Assembly, issued this emotional appeal:

> "Never again war, war never again! Never again one against another, or even one above another, but always, on every occasion, with each other."

His Holiness spoke in this very place, to the signatories of the international Magna Carta "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

In 1992, the Secretary-General of the United Nations included the following devastating fact in his report entitled "An Agenda for Peace":

> "Since the creation of the United Nations in 1945, over 100 major conflicts around the world have left some 20 million dead." (*A/47/277, para. 14*)

Twenty million people represents one and a half times the population of Chile.

Notwithstanding the lessons history has taught us, we human beings, like latter-day Cains, go on spilling the blood of our brothers, bringing untold suffering to the world. It is our world, the only one we have and it belongs to us all; it is a world in which no one is superfluous and no one can escape responsibility for commissions or omissions.

Another Pope, John Paul II, speaking in 1979 before the General Assembly, reminded us that:

> "the spirit of war, in its basic primordial meaning, springs up and grows to maturity where the inalienable rights of man are violated." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Plenary Meetings, 17th meeting, para. 25)*

In 1992 the Secretary-General put it this way:

> "Poverty, disease, famine, oppression and despair abound, joining to produce 17 million refugees, 20 million displaced persons and massive migrations of peoples within and beyond national borders." (*A/47/277, para. 13*)

In the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children, approved in 1990 by Chile among other countries, it is stated that:

> "Each day, 40,000 children die from malnutrition and disease, including acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), from the lack of clean water and inadequate sanitation and from the effects of the drug problem. (*A/45/625, annex, para. 6*)

Forty thousand children a day means 1.2 million a month, or more than 14 million a year. And that does not take into account the number of persons who today are being cut down by shrapnel, or the number that will be cut down tomorrow.

Even without war, we have witnessed the negative effects of nuclear radiation, water pollution and the depletion of the ozone layer, any of which can be more dangerous for people than a hostile army. In 1990 the former President of Chile, Patricio Aylwin, said here,

> "If we wish to remain faithful to the principles that presided over the founding of the Organization we must be consistent in pursuing the idea that world peace is closely linked to the reign of freedom, economic and social progress and rising standards of living for all the world's peoples." (*A/45/PV.12, p. 21*)

Today it is clearer than ever that world peace will not be properly safeguarded unless we face up promptly and appropriately to the root economic and social causes of many of the conflicts that mankind is now experiencing. It will be hard to build a lasting peace as long as violations of human rights, massive migration, lack of freedom, hunger, poverty and social marginalization persist.

It was precisely that certainty that prompted the Government of Chile to promote, within the United Nations, the holding of the World Summit for Social Development, which, by agreement of the General Assembly, will take place in Copenhagen next year. In the view of the Government of Chile, the World Summit for Social Development will offer a unique opportunity to inaugurate a new phase in the life of the United Nations

on the basis of the integrated approach to which I have referred.

By the same token, because we regard the United Nations as a very relevant body, we have resolutely supported strengthening and reforming it and have participated actively in the debate on the restructuring of some of its organs. We believe that concepts such as greater democratization, rationalization and transparency will give the activities of the United Nations even greater legitimacy.

Accordingly, Chile has made concrete proposals with respect to the expansion of the Security Council, of which my country hopes to be a member in 1996 and 1997. We believe that in that organ we will be able to make our contribution to the new spirit of cooperation that today characterizes international relations.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations gives Chile particular joy. Hence, we have cooperated actively with the Preparatory Committee, of which we have the honour of being a Vice-Chairman. I take this opportunity to mention the excellent leadership provided by Ambassador Butler as Chairman of that Committee. I would also like to emphasize here the commendable work done by Mrs. Sorensen in her capacity as Special Adviser to the Secretary-General in this important commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary.

It is precisely in response to the initiatives that emerged from this forum that Chile has established a national committee for the fiftieth anniversary, which is designed to coordinate at the national level the various activities planned to draw attention to this important anniversary and to help our compatriots gain a fuller understanding of the importance of the United Nations for mankind as a whole. We wish our national committee to incorporate all sectors of the population, and it is therefore made up of representatives of our principal organizations, including the Senate of the Republic, which is the branch of State power that I have the honour of representing.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate Chile's commitment to the activities of the United Nations and its determination to cooperate substantively in the various areas in which the Organization is active. In this way we hope to contribute to the construction of a more stable and just twenty-first century in which full participation is guaranteed.

Finally, let me say that if we adults do not fulfil our historical responsibilities, I pray to God that the youth of the world, our sons and daughters, will at least make it possible for the $2 million spent every minute, according to the Secretary-General, on military defence to be reallocated to the creation of a world of greater solidarity.

Mr. Graf zu Rantzau (Germany): I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and Finland, Norway and Sweden.

We are approaching the golden anniversary of this Organization. Next year will be the fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter. In this context, we offer our special congratulations to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, Ambassador Richard Butler of Australia, who has so ably guided the Committee's work since its inception. Our thanks go also to all the members of the Bureau and to Under-Secretary-General Sorensen and the staff of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary secretariat.

Since its establishment in April 1992 the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations has been an active body which has managed to coordinate and promote world-wide activities for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary. It has offered a forum for an exchange of information among United Nations Member States with regard to their national preparations for the event. By now about 80 countries, including all members of the European Union, as well as Finland, Norway and Sweden, have established national committees for the commemoration of this event. They are preparing countless activities on local, regional, national and international levels.

At the same time, the Preparatory Committee provided Member States with regular updates about the planning and coordinating activities of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary secretariat. We appreciate the preparations which are under way for numerous projects covering a wide range of activities in the arts, publications, politics and education. Activities which are directed towards the world's youth enjoy our particular support.

The European Union and Finland, Norway and Sweden support the efforts made and welcome the Secretary-General's invitation for a special meeting of the General Assembly at its fiftieth session at the level of Heads of State or Government to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary. That meeting should celebrate the

fundamental role of the United Nations in pursuing the purposes ascribed to it by the drafters of the Charter 50 years ago.

The Preparatory Committee has also taken up the task of attempting to produce a special fiftieth anniversary declaration which will reflect common views of all United Nations Member States about the past, the present and, particularly, the future of our Organization. The declaration should be clear and concise. We hope that consensus on such a declaration can be reached.

The European Union and Finland, Norway and Sweden wish to reiterate their support for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary on a national and an international level. The event should be commemorated by all peoples of the world, united for a better future. In this context, we feel that the central orientation of the celebrations ought to be towards the future, highlighting the role of the United Nations in tomorrow's world.

Let me say that we endorse the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee set out in section V of its report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

Mr. Zlenko (Ukraine) *(interpretation from Russian)*: The delegation of Ukraine would like to thank the Rapporteur, Mrs. Lucille Mathurin Mair, for her well prepared and skilfully presented report. In our view, the report provides a good basis for further work by the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations.

I should like, at the outset, to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Butler, and to the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for Public Policy, Mrs. Gillian Sorensen, for their tireless efforts to ensure a proper celebration of the Organization's anniversary.

The most important date on the international calendar for 1995 will undoubtedly be that which marks the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The United Nations was founded by countries that had borne the brunt of the harsh ordeals of the most brutal war in the history of mankind. We are proud of the fact that Ukraine took an active part in laying the foundations for the Organization and, together with other members of the international community, is today making its contribution to fulfilling the noble purposes of the United Nations.

Throughout these years the United Nations, in an effort to harmonize its activity with contemporary global developments, has continued to be an Organization that is truly universal. The unique nature of its structure and its dedication to the lofty purposes and principles of its Charter have promoted the creation of a new dimension in relations between countries and peoples and, to a significant extent, has consolidated the foundations for the building of a new world order. A driving force in this process has been the achieving of independence by many countries of the world, including Ukraine.

Ukraine, as one of the founding Members of the United Nations, has always taken a most active part in the activities of this unique international Organization, which it regards as the basis for the building of inter-State relations. Bearing in mind the enormous changes in international relations in recent years, Ukraine considers the United Nations to have been one of the reliable guarantors of the independence and territorial integrity of young independent States during the most difficult period of building and developing their own statehood.

We also believe that the United Nations can act as a major stimulus to economic reconstruction and, above all, serve as an inexhaustible source of experience in the fields of international contacts and of the authority of States. It is precisely from these perspectives that we view the forthcoming celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

A year and a half ago a national organizing committee to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations was established in Ukraine to promote the international community's initiative. That committee has done a great deal of work since then. By edict of the Government of Ukraine, a programme of projects to celebrate the anniversary has been prepared and ratified, in cooperation with the relevant Ministries and agencies of the country. The programme includes a wide range of projects, both scientific and cultural. It provides, *inter alia*, for the creation in Kiev of a memorial park, where trees will be planted by eminent political and public figures.

To finance these undertakings the Government of Ukraine, despite the country's very difficult economic situation, has allocated significant funds from the State budget. Unfortunately, an analysis of the work of our national committee during its first year indicates that the means provided are insufficient for realization of the fundamental elements of the programme that I have

mentioned. We are therefore now seeking financial support from various firms and private companies.

Work in this area is producing some results. Thus, for example, thanks to support from public organizations in Japan, we shall be able to host in Kiev next May an international conference on the subject of the United Nations and the future generation. A more detailed description of the objectives and conditions with regard to the financing of this undertaking will be submitted to the United Nations Secretariat at a later date, on the occasion of the celebration of the anniversary.

We also hope to receive all possible assistance from the United Nations system, including the Secretariat, for our positive initiatives in respect of the celebration of the anniversary. Here, I refer to the provision of various types of data — video, audio, printed and consultative. In that context, we believe that it is worth proposing to all national committees that they submit to the Secretariat a short report on their work this year. Such a report, in addition to relating successes and achievements, could reflect the basic problems and difficulties that States are encountering in the course of their preparations for the national-level celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization. The general conclusions of national committees' reports would be helpful in the preparation of basic recommendations. Thus the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of the national committees in the year of celebration would be considerably enhanced. In our view, it is precisely analysis of the first steps in the activity of the Preparatory Committee that is missing from the report submitted today.

The delegation of Ukraine supports the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General and of the Preparatory Committee to convene a special commemorative meeting, at the highest level, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations Charter. In our view, such a meeting would provide an excellent opportunity to focus on and discuss problems pertaining to the development of mankind in the post-confrontation era, to analyse the current situation creatively and provide answers to the challenges of the present and to sketch out the prospects for development in the future.

We believe that it is important that Member and observer States should participate in this undertaking at the level of Head of State or Government. I should like to take this opportunity to report that the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, has gratefully accepted the invitation of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to participate in the work of the special commemorative meeting.

No less important is the adoption of a solemn declaration marking the anniversary of the United Nations. As we see it, this should reflect the realities of today's world order and the vision of the future and should reaffirm Member States' dedication to the principles of the United Nations Charter and the fundamental purposes of the Organization and its various bodies, which have stood the test of time.

Unfortunately, none of the versions of the text of the declaration before us is entirely satisfactory. We believe there are two reasons for this. First, the versions proposed do not take account of the interests of all groups of States; and secondly, they do not acknowledge the universally recognized principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, namely sovereignty, territorial integrity, the inviolability of the borders of independent States, the equality of sovereign States or the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Not until we can balance these approaches with the conceptual principles stated in paragraph 11 of the Preparatory Committee's report (A/49/48) can we expect to conclude successfully our work on the declaration, on the basis of full consensus.

It is important — and I wish to draw particular attention to this point — that the declaration should highlight the major areas of United Nations activity and the guiding principles of its work in the future.

The text of the declaration should also include a section entitled "Partnership for development". An end to suspicion, mistrust and mutual counter-claims, in the interests of stable economic development, a display of solidarity in order to strengthen international justice and equality, a proclamation of the importance of establishing true partnership relations, on the basis of equality, in economic and related fields — these are all essential elements of the conceptual approach which must provide the basis for this proposal.

Now, as never before, we have every reason to see the United Nations as a powerful instrument, capable of maintaining international peace and security, strengthening justice and human rights, and promoting "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom". The year of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations must also serve as an invitation to formulate and implement a plan to transform the United Nations into an organization of the future. In addition,

that year, as is noted in the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, represents

> "an exhilarating challenge and an invaluable opportunity to forge a global consensus behind development, in all of its dimensions, as the most lasting foundation for international peace and security and as the greatest hope for all humanity". *(A/49/1, para. 12)*

The delegation of Ukraine supports such an approach and is ready actively to participate.

Mr. Shambos (Cyprus): The forthcoming fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations comes at a time when mankind is at a crucial juncture of history. On the one hand, there is a feeling of hope brought about by the end of the cold war, and on the other hand there is deep unrest, as a result of the numerous conflicts and the strife that are causing bloodshed and suffering.

The United Nations anniversary, next year, will offer an opportunity for in-depth analysis of half a century's work and, even more challenging, an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to the purposes and principles of the Charter.

Since it was founded half a century ago, the United Nations has sought to build an international community based on peace, international security and the rule of law. In this quest, the United Nations has, admittedly, an uneven record. We have world peace, even though local conflicts and civil wars; we have made great strides with regard to decolonization and in the struggle against apartheid; we have made meaningful progress in dealing with the environment, population growth and social development. On the other hand, the spectre of genocide has not disappeared; poverty and destitution remain ingrained as much in the South as in the North; fundamental human rights are still violated; and, most importantly, aggression and occupation have not been eradicated. We know, bitterly, better than others in this respect.

Regrettably, at this stage, world order and a world free from force and the scourge of war have not yet been realized.

Today, more than ever before, we have the chance to help the Organization to meet its goals by implementing the provisions of the Charter regarding collective international security, by carrying out organizational reforms and by giving the United Nations adequate manpower and finances to carry out its mission.

The principles and ideals laid down by the founding fathers almost 50 years ago are universal and can, if we rededicate ourselves to them, guide us for the next half century and beyond towards the peace and justice to which we all aspire. We live in an ever-changing world where the need for corresponding changes in our Organization is not only necessary but also a matter of survival. We must strive to understand the nature of the new global political economic and social environment which is fundamentally different from that of 1945. We must be determined to meet the new challenges to our Organization by building on the everlasting principles and values of the existing Charter.

The report of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations contains a wealth of commemorative programmes and activities, which are evidence of the most constructive preparatory work being done by its members, under the wise guidance of the Committee's Chairman, the Permanent Representative of Australia, Mr. Richard Butler. We fully support the proposal for global "teach-ins" about the United Nations, the issuing of commemorative coins, television programmes, symposia, exhibits and so on.

We believe that the Committee is on the right path in endeavouring to create awareness in all strata of society, by rejuvenating the interest of ordinary people and by spotlighting the purposes and principles of the Charter as beacons of hope for a better, peaceful and just world. We all must re-emphasize the need for the observance of these principles and our commitment to respect them without reservation or selectivity, both in the spirit and the letter. Only thus can our Organization meet its promised limits and goals.

As Cyprus is a country whose foreign policy evolves around the United Nations, and whose stands are guided by the principles enshrined in the Charter, we have already established our national committee on the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. The Committee is preparing a number of programmes, with special emphasis on enhancing an awareness of the important role of the United Nations among all age strata of our society. We specifically plan educational campaigns on the United Nations, special television programmes and newspaper articles, school lectures and film shows and the creation of

commemorative items, such as stamps, to mark the anniversary.

Cyprus wishes to pay special tribute to the Under-Secretary-General, Mrs. Gillian Sorensen, representative of the Secretary-General for this historic event. Cyprus has had occasion to cooperate with Mrs. Sorensen on issues affecting the diplomatic community and the city of New York. We know her dedication, her unparalleled qualifications and, above all, her human ways of doing things. We wish her success and pledge, of course, our fullest cooperation.

Mr. Chong-Ha Yoo (Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Republic of Korea would like to express its satisfaction with the overall progress made so far in preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in 1995. In particular, we wish to note that the Preparatory Committee, under the dedicated and most professional leadership of its Chairman, Ambassador Butler of Australia, has produced a draft resolution regarding the special commemorative meeting, which will be the highlight of the anniversary events. The Government of the Republic of Korea attaches great importance to this meeting and urges all Member States to lend their full support to make it a truly successful and momentous occasion.

We would also like to acknowledge the excellent job done by the Under-Secretary-General, Mrs. Sorensen, and her staff in the secretariat in guiding efforts to develop various programmes and projects to observe the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, and to convey the ideals and achievements of the Organization to peoples across the globe. My delegation believes that these initiatives will help national committees to formulate their own programmes.

My delegation shares the view that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations should be not only a festive occasion, but also an opportunity to reaffirm the principles of its Charter and set useful guidelines for its future work. In this regard, we believe that during the anniversary the international community should seek various means, in accordance with the Charter principles, the better to meet the challenges ahead. Since its inception in 1945 the United Nations has carried out its multidimensional tasks as peace-keeper, peacemaker, promoter of human rights, development and international justice and protector of the environment. Throughout its half-century history the world body has experienced both successes and failures. At this juncture the international community should utilize the various lessons of the Organization's past experience as guidelines for the next 50 years and beyond.

The Republic of Korea owes a great deal to the United Nations. The inauguration of our Government in 1948 was done under the auspices of the United Nations, and it was this Organization which played a major role in ending the war in the Korean Peninsula in the early 1950s. Accordingly, the contributions of the United Nations to Korea remain deeply rooted in the memory of the Korean people.

In the light of our historical relationship with the United Nations, the National Committee of the Republic of Korea for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations was established last April and is now preparing a variety of programmes and celebratory events, placing special emphasis on enhancing awareness of the role of the United Nations among the younger generations of Korea.

We will also actively participate in the programmes sponsored by the United Nations. In this regard I am pleased to note that a leading Korean corporation, Goldstar, has recently signed a contract with the United Nations to act as a global sponsor of preparations for the United Nations fiftieth anniversary.

Finally, my delegation wishes to make a brief comment on the future work of the Preparatory Committee. Notwithstanding our general satisfaction with the Committee's work, my delegation is concerned at the slow progress of its drafting group in drawing up a declaration for adoption on 24 October 1995. My delegation sincerely hopes that the drafting group will reach consensus on a draft as early as possible in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation.

Mr. Manz (Austria): Let me first of all pay tribute to the way in which the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, Ambassador Richard Butler of Australia, has managed to guide the Committee through the not always easy process of finding consensus on ways and means of celebrating this landmark event. I should also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Sorensen and her able staff of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary secretariat for their untiring efforts to promote our Organization and its ideals throughout 1995.

Austria fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Germany

on behalf of the European Union. The year 1995 will mark the fortieth year of Austrian membership of the United Nations. As one of the host countries of the Organization, we feel a special responsibility for its development. I should therefore like to add a few observations of a more general nature.

This anniversary is no time for complacency or self-congratulation. We must realize that very few people outside this building are interested in the finer procedural points which so often are our first and last line of defence. Despite many achievements, a good part of the tremendous potential of the United Nations is squandered. All too often special interests stand in the way of progress in the direction of the goals to which we have all subscribed in the Charter.

The end of the cold war, which for so many years almost paralysed the work of the Organization, has presented us with a unique opportunity to turn the United Nations into the instrument that it was originally intended to be. Of course, nobody would expect such a profound change to be taken in stride, but at this critical juncture we must not allow a confrontational situation similar to those in the past to develop, albeit along different dividing lines. Let us turn 1995 into the year when we forge a durable consensus to take on the important challenges facing us all.

We should build upon the positive tendencies and ideas that have evolved in the recent past. In this context the Agenda for Peace and the soon-to-be published Agenda for Development constitute important starting points. They will certainly provoke lively debates for quite some time. But already they have made one point abundantly clear: all the main problems to be addressed by the Organization and the peoples of the world are very closely interlinked. We will have to address all of them at the same time.

Austria has therefore placed two seminars at the centre of its national celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary. In March 1995 the Austrian Government, together with the International Peace Academy, will organize a seminar on peacemaking and peace-keeping for the next century. The Secretary-General has kindly agreed to present a keynote address introducing the theme of the seminar. In August the traditional international seminar for junior diplomats in Salzburg will be dedicated to a discussion of the Agenda for Development and the reform of the United Nations.

To conclude on a lighter note, I should like to take this opportunity to inform the Assembly of the Austrian Government's plans completely to refurbish the Viennese Café downstairs on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary. This should have a long-lasting positive effect on our work in this building.

Mr. Melendez-Barahona (El Salvador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I am pleased to deliver this statement on agenda item 44, "Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations", on behalf of the following Central American countries: Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and El Salvador.

The Central American countries express their appreciation to the Preparatory Committee for the progress it has made in the preparations for commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, and their gratitude for its report, which contains a series of recommendations for commemorating a historic milestone in current international relations.

We are pleased with the set of projects being implemented and the projects being prepared to commemorate a special date in the life of our world Organization. The national committees established in our respective countries have been informed of these projects, so that they may take them into account in developing programmes at the national level. We also welcome the plan to convene a special commemorative meeting at the level of Heads of State or Government and to have the General Assembly adopt on 24 October 1995 a solemn declaration in which Member States would reaffirm their support for the principles of the Charter, which embody the international community's yearnings and aspirations for the Organization's future work.

We believe, however, that these events must go beyond commemorations and declarations of principles. This date affords us an opportunity for reflection, heightened awareness and a constructive analysis of our Organization's past, present and future.

The very idea of the United Nations was born and consolidated in the crucible of a war against a common enemy. Just like its predecessor, the late League of Nations, it was created to avoid another world war, which, given the emergence of nuclear weapons, would have even more devastating consequences. The United Nations was established, in the words of the Charter, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". It was created to avoid war and to seek peace through political means and negotiation based on a multilateral

system and an institutional structure centred in the United Nations.

The collective maintenance of international peace and security, the fostering of friendly relations, the improvement of the living conditions of peoples everywhere and the harmonization of the efforts of the United Nations to attain our common goals — these are the original purposes and principles which the Organization should have put fully into effect in order to build a better and safer world for humanity. However, our efforts to that end have been impeded by contradictions which have been reflected within the Organization itself because of its intergovernmental nature and which have led to political differences and conflicts of interest, but also and particularly by the political deadlock and the Organization's inertia resulting from the East-West confrontation, during which problems — some of which remain unsolved — accumulated.

In this respect, the achievements of the United Nations through much of its history have been politically and socially limited, while the picture has been far more positive in the field of cooperation and assistance for development. This situation is a reflection of the inequality and prevailing power structure of international relations, which have often been used to advance parochial interests, disregarding and thus distorting the Organization's universality.

During the cold war, insecurity was a dominant factor and international economic disparities, instead of being narrowed, were actually broadened. With the end of the cold war, however, new hopes, expectations and opportunities were born for fulfilling the aspirations of peoples, in consonance with the spirit of the founders of the United Nations.

At present, given the improvement in international relations resulting from the disappearance of ideological barriers, distrust and hostility, we have entered a phase of transition towards what we assume will be a new and more just and equitable international order. The new arrangement of forces worldwide has modified the perceptions within the Organization, and this has provided the impetus for restructuring and revitalizing it and making it more efficient, particularly since most Members are convinced of the need for change, democratization and a redirection of the role of the United Nations in world affairs. But this institutional change must not further enhance the capacity of the developed countries, rich and powerful as they are, to influence the decisions of the Organization to the detriment of the participation of the small States. Only in that way can we prevent the Organization from reflecting the unjust international order based on a concert of powerful nations running world affairs.

We all know that the maintenance of international peace and security remains a fundamental objective of the Organization. But it is also facing old and new challenges in a world characterized by major international inequalities — a situation that cries out for change, in terms not only of structures but also of procedures and decision-making, in order to attune and adapt the Organization to the interests and needs of all the nations of the world.

We cannot delight in the increased participation of the United Nations in localized conflicts, although this is certainly one of its functions. Rather, this should cause us concern, because the Organization's purposes and objectives are not being achieved and doubts are arising about whether it can effectively prevent and resolve conflicts. While in the past this was reflected in a sectoral approach to global problems, now it is felt that the Organization must respond to global problems and challenges, where social and environmental factors have become relevant within a broad concept of full and sustainable development.

In the process of renewing the United Nations, Member States have often expressed their continued belief in its basic principles, which must be faithfully respected if democracy is to exist within the Organization. This applies in particular to the principles of equality, universality, responsibility, impartiality and respect for diversity and transparency. The effective implementation of these principles would overcome much of the criticism concerning the use of the Organization's machinery for specific ends.

Under the new international order, there have not been fewer conflicts but, on the contrary, many more, because of long-standing factors in the economic, political and social structures of States, inequalities in international relations, and new political, ethnic, religious, territorial and national-identity issues. This new order has not been applicable to developing countries; indeed, instead of improving their economic and social conditions, it has exacerbated them. All this cries out for a fresh start.

Of course, the situation in 1945 in no way resembled the present one. But it is also obvious that contradictions, conflicts of interest, internal conflicts, international disputes and development problems persist, and that the only universal system available for addressing the requirements of States and the hopes and aspirations of their peoples is still the United Nations.

The purposes and principles of the Organization continue to be valid, but we believe that to attain them substantive changes in the Organization must be introduced. We believe, also, that reform is a serious and complex task that must be based on a comprehensive approach. The United Nations must be an organization which is designed to serve all the nations of the world and which permits the greatest participation possible in decision-making, as opposed to the current situation, in which it is the privilege of a few to impose their priorities and opinions on world events.

We understand and are aware of the factors that impede the building of an organization that can fully meet the interests of all its members and effectively guide international affairs. But if we wish this system to endure we must strive and work tirelessly to ensure a balance in the implementation of the purposes and principles of the Organization.

It is timely to recall that in 1992 we held a summit meeting of the Security Council. At that historic gathering the leaders of the States Members of that organ, in particular the major Powers as permanent members with the right of veto, made statements affirming their commitment and political will to support the work of the Organization in the sense of attuning it to the new conditions, requirements and challenges faced by the international community, including the imperative of democratizing it and of allowing for the participation of all Member States in decision-making, with a view to obtaining the greatest degree of consensus possible, making it more transparent and capable of equitable and non-discriminatory action — statements which were subsequently reflected in the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace". These declarations of intent, however, have not become a reality to the extent the majority of the international community would have liked, but we feel that the forthcoming summit meeting of the Security Council — to be held at the beginning of next year — should afford an opportunity to reaffirm the political determination to make the necessary changes to attain the original purposes of the United Nations.

The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations provides us an opportunity as States Members to make a fresh commitment to galvanize the process of renewal by refocusing our efforts based upon an analysis of the evolution of the Organization's work. We must also work in concert and make joint efforts to make sure that the United Nations is updated and attuned to meet global challenges.

Finally, democratizing, changing and reorienting the United Nations involves a political decision that must be based on the full conviction of States Members of the need to reverse current trends within the Organization by a complete, transparent and consistent process.

The United Nations has been what Governments have wanted it to be, particularly those with the greatest capability and resources to influence the major decisions taken by the Organization, and they are also those which, in the final analysis, will make possible the renewal of the Organization. This will hinge on the extent to which they are prepared to recognize the interests and problems faced by the international community as a whole, and on the extent to which they are prepared to initiate the process of setting up a truly new international order that would take into account the interests of developing countries, one that would be different from the status quo that has prevailed in international relations ever since the end of the Second World War.

Mr. Illueca (Panama) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My very first words from this rostrum are meant to hail as President, Ambassador Amara Essy, an illustrious son of Côte d'Ivoire, and someone who truly reflects the superb calibre of men and women in Africa dedicated to the service of great causes. I also wish to hail those eminent personalities who, acting in the capacity of Vice-Presidents, are working in concert with him in the Bureau.

As to the item on the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations I should like to add Panama's voice to all those who have already paid tribute to the work done thus far by the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. My delegation has noted the dynamism that Mrs. Gillian Sorensen and her team have shown. We also wish to pay tribute to the outstanding job done by the Preparatory Committee, under the leadership of Ambassador Richard Butler of Australia, which, along with the impetus provided by the secretariat for the fiftieth anniversary, allows us even now to see an outline

of the success that will be made of this global commemoration.

As a representative of a democratic Government that took power in Panama just two months ago, this opportunity is indeed propitious for me to declare that my country has decided to take part fully in activities to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary.

The Preparatory Committee has the mandate to prepare a draft declaration, and to that end it has set up an open-ended drafting group, to which Panama is committed to contribute.

Panama is a small country and historically it has been to the forefront in efforts to achieve unity and integration throughout Latin America; a country which indeed reflects the spirit of Simon Bolivar, and one whose international relations have a universalist tradition, symbolized by the open channel that runs through the heart of its territory, providing a link between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. It is our view that the text of the declaration to be adopted must reflect a shared sense that we all indeed endorse and must be formulated in terms that will be understood by the common people. The declaration must be capable of inspiring not only men and women of all ages but, in particular, children and young people with a sense of profound understanding of the significance of this fiftieth anniversary.

We hope and expect to see that the commemorative events and the declaration itself will point towards a noble future for mankind, in particular, in so far as peace, equality, justice and development are concerned. It will be possible to attain this goal only if we ensure the participation of our national committees, non-governmental organizations and the entire United Nations system and its staff, and if we enjoy the backing of people everywhere around the globe who are yearning to see the ideals of the San Francisco Charter for a more democratic, just and humane international order become a reality.

The President: I now call on the Permanent Representative of Australia, Chairman of the Preparatory Committee.

Mr. Butler (Australia), Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations: Because of the lateness of the hour and the length of this fascinating debate I shall be very brief. I have sought to speak as Chairman of the Committee at the end of this debate as I think it is fitting to say a few words of thanks and to make one brief comment.

I thank our Rapporteur for the outstanding job that she did to assist in the preparation of the report before the Assembly and for introducing it so comprehensively today. I am also very grateful to Member States for the constant attention they have given to the work of the Committee throughout the past year. The quality of that work is reflected in many ways, not just in the text of the report but in the concrete programmes that are emerging both within Member States and internationally for the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary. Members of the Bureau and I have always felt very strongly supported by Member States with a real determination to ensure that next year will be what we all want it to be and what history requires it to be.

Of course, I must give deep and especially grateful mention to Under-Secretary-General Sorensen for the extraordinary work she has performed during the last year, which I know we can all expect to continue with even greater dynamism and results as we move closer to the fiftieth anniversary, and our thanks go to the very small but very effective staff that has been provided to help her in the task.

I want to thank too those who have spoken in today's debate. I think it has been clear today that there is a deep sense in the house of the importance of what we are preparing and of how much we see it as not just a reflection on the past, of having arrived at the great age of half a century, but as something far more than that, an opportunity for us to chart the future that we all so deeply want for this Organization and for all of us as representatives of the people who sent us here.

We are of course beginning the final phase of our activity. We have tasks of commemoration, of education and of celebration to bring to conclusion, so that a few months from now they will reach out to the world, especially to the young people, bringing the message of the successful conclusion of this Organization's half-century of life, often under difficult conditions, and, more importantly, the vision of the future life of this Organization reoriented to the welfare of people throughout the world.

In that context, the other great task we have to complete in the next few months is that of drafting the declaration of 1995. It is of course my hope — and I know it is a hope shared by all — that that declaration

will be a beacon of light to all of the people who look to this United Nations for so much, a beacon of light shining on a new path for the United Nations in the years ahead.

As Chairman, I thank all members. I commend to them the two draft resolutions contained in the report. I look forward to working further with all members in the months ahead as we bring this great work of the fiftieth anniversary to a conclusion.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974 and 43/177 of 15 December 1988, I now call on the Observer of Palestine.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) *(interpretation from Arabic):* Please let me begin by expressing our deep appreciation of the efforts of the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, Ambassador Richard Butler, in steering the work of the Committee and our thanks to Ambassador Lucille Mair, the Committee's Rapporteur. Also allow me to extend appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General, Mrs. Gillian Sorensen, and to the team that assists her for their valuable efforts aimed at making a success of the activities of the Preparatory Committee and at providing the appropriate conditions, both within and outside the United Nations system, for a successful celebration that would reflect the importance of the event.

The United Nations, which has undergone many changes both in form and in substance, is now the international Organization on which the States and peoples pin their hopes for preserving peace and security, for avoiding wars and disasters, for ensuring a prosperous economic life for us all rather than for just a few, and for establishing a world order based on respect for law and democracy.

As far as we Palestinians are concerned, the United Nations, over and above all this, symbolizes also the Palestinian cause. In terms of time, the United Nations has been concerned with the Palestinian cause since the Organization's inception and in terms of substance, it was the United Nations that put an end to the mandate on Palestine and divided it into two States. Thus, it is very difficult to draw a line between the United Nations and the Palestinian cause. Hence the abiding responsibility of the United Nations towards the Palestinian cause, at the legal, moral and political levels, until such time as that cause is really resolved and until such time as comprehensive and permanent peace is achieved in the Middle East.

The Israeli Ambassador has referred before this Committee to two very important resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in the first years of the United Nations. We agree with him regarding the importance of the two resolutions, but disagree with regard to their meaning. The first is resolution 181 (1947), which divided Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab State. The Jewish State was established on the *de jure* basis of this division, while the Arab State has not been established yet. It is therefore the duty of the international community as a whole to continue to work for the establishment of that State in order for a just and durable peace to be achieved in the Middle East. The second is resolution 273 (1949) whereby Israel was accepted as a State Member of the United Nations in 1949. It must be recalled here that both the Security Council and the General Assembly adopted the positive resolution relating to that membership in the light of Israeli legal commitments to implement the resolutions of the United Nations, in particular resolution 194 (1948), which stipulates, *inter alia*, the return of the Palestinian refugees to their lands or their compensation. This has not taken place so far. Again it is the duty of the international community as a whole to continue to work in order to restore to the Palestinian refugees their rights.

It is not correct to speak of previous resolutions of the United Nations as though the whole world was wrong and only one State was right. Also, it is not useful to our joint action in the future. The world has changed, and the situation in the Middle East has changed. Fortunately, the Israeli stance too has changed, side by side with the change in the Palestinian stance. All this has combined to bring about the positive changes in the resolutions of the United Nations. We have worked in the past and shall work in the future to see to it that the resolutions of the United Nations are in harmony with the reality, especially with the positive changes that have taken place and continue to take place. In so doing, we have to be realistic enough to realize that the road to comprehensive, just and durable peace in the Middle East is a long one still. We must also keep in sight and abide by the principles enshrined in international law, in humanitarian international law and in the Charter of the United Nations. The fact that the peace process has started should not mean that this is the end of our work; it should rather mean that this is the beginning of the work as it should be carried out.

Palestine attaches particular importance to the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

In view of the importance we attach to the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we attach particular importance to the application of the measures adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 48/215 B of 26 May 1994 to Palestine as an Observer. We thank the Member States for deciding this question in the manner set forth in the report of the Preparatory Committee and look forward to its strict implementation.

We wish to thank in particular the Member States of the Movement of the Non-Aligned Movement and its President, Indonesia, and pay tribute to the positive stance taken by the host country, the United States of America, which made it possible to reach the consensus needed for the adoption of the appropriate measure.

We shall do our part in performing the serious work that lies ahead in preparation for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and will ensure full participation by all our people in those preparations and we shall also do our part in ensuring justice for our people and building peace for the peoples of the Middle East, real peace, at a far remove from war and confrontation, peace that would be built on coexistence, tolerance and prosperity. It is our hope that this will prevail throughout the entire world. We pray to God that the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations should move us forward towards this objective.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

We shall now proceed to consider the two draft resolutions contained in paragraph 34 of the report (A/49/48) of the Preparatory Committee.

I call on the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Perfiliev (Director of General Assembly and Trusteeship Council Affairs Division): Under the terms of draft resolution II, contained in document A/49/48, the General Assembly would, *inter alia*, decide that the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary should continue its work and report thereon to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, and/or during the forty-ninth session, as required.

It is anticipated that the Preparatory Committee would need to hold 24 meetings during 1995 and these would have to be added to the calendar of conferences and meetings. It is assumed that the 1995 meetings would require interpretation and translation services in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

The extent to which the Organization's permanent capacity would need to be supplemented by temporary assistance resources can be determined only in the light of the calendar of conferences for 1994 and 1995. However, provisions are made under section 25 of the proposed programme budget for 1994 to 1995 not only for meetings programmed at the time of budget preparation but also for meetings that would be authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings and conferences are consistent with the pattern of meetings in past years.

Consequently, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution II, no additional appropriation would be required under section 25 of the programme budget for the biennium 1994 to 1995.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution I, entitled "Commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations", contained in paragraph 34 of the report (A/49/48) of the Preparatory Committee.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution I?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 49/11).

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution II, entitled "Work of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations", also contained in paragraph 34 of the report (A/49/48) of the Preparatory Committee.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution II?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 49/12).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 44.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.